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Cabinet  
Sec. dev

#2  
Background studies on day care  
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Government  
Publications

260

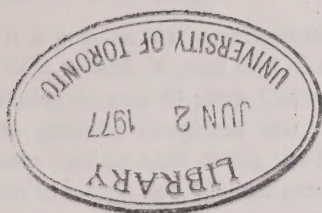
Canada The Royal Commission on the Status of Women

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selves. Most children at this age are not self-supporting since they have not completed their education. In Canada—as in many countries—it is a well-established practice, even though there is no legal obligation to do so, for many parents to continue to support their children for some years beyond the age of 16 and often until they have completed their education. We believe that separated or divorced parents, who are able to do so, should in the same way support the education of their children. This problem may be particularly acute for women who have children in their custody and not sufficient means to support them alone if maintenance is cut off. We, therefore, support the growing body of opinion in favour of requiring a separated or divorced parent to continue to pay maintenance for the children over the age of 16 as long as they are in school and possibly as long as they are in university. Orders to do so should be left within the discretion of the court, under section 2 (b) (ii) of the Divorce Act. We feel that the judge should not be prevented from making such an order.

142. Therefore, we recommend that the Divorce Act be amended so that the words "educational needs" be added to the list of exceptions where the maintenance of children over the age of 16 years may be ordered as a charge falling to the parents.


#### Part B—Parents and Society

##### (i) The Children

###### Introduction

143. The status of a woman is altered in various ways through marriage, but a more profound change takes place with the birth of a child. She feels the pressure of new demands which will extend well into the future. A young child requires almost constant supervision. Throughout the various stages of infancy and the restless inquisitive pre-school years, an adult must be in charge. Through the middle years and the teens, loving care and guidance are needed. The necessity of the job is not in question, it is whether or not the mother should be charged with the sole responsibility. Today's society does attach primary responsibility to the mother: when a child is sick it is the mother, even though she may be working, who is expected to take time off to provide care.

144. The father may share the day-to-day care and responsibility of children, but if either parent is a full-time worker the time available for



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child care is restricted. Parents require supplementary help, and society may legitimately be called upon to contribute to community services for its younger generation. The equality of women means little without such a programme, which should include a number of different services, among them day-care centres.<sup>49</sup>

145. We have looked in detail at the services which appear to be most urgently needed. In general, they encompass household help by domestic workers or visiting homemakers as well as day-care centres for full-time, and short-term or emergency care. Such community services received very high priority in submissions to the Commission. The request came from every part of Canada, from the Yukon to Newfoundland, and from small as well as large communities. There is a nation-wide demand for child-care services from parents, teachers, social workers and organizations representing a cross-section of the people.

146. It is possible that supplementary care benefits not only the parents but the child as well. A great deal of research has been undertaken on this subject during the past 40 years. Controversial conclusions have been drawn, but it is generally recognized that child development requires a stable relationship with an adult during the first three years: there are observable differences in mental and physical growth between children who receive the stimulus and satisfaction of warm personal attention and those who do not. But psychologists do not necessarily insist that the adult in charge be the natural mother. A mother substitute can fill the role. Perhaps more significant is the further conclusion that additional sympathetic care from several adults may be more beneficial to the child than exclusive attachment to one.

147. In fact, psychologists point out that the over-protection and possessiveness which may result from a mother's undivided attention may be harmful. It is worth remembering that earlier generations usually had wider family relationships. The extended family often included grandparents, aunts and uncles all under the same roof. Sole reliance on the mother is a more recent development.

148. For the sake of both mother and child, it should be recognized that all women who give birth to children are not necessarily good mothers. It is a fact that many women operate much more successfully in other fields

<sup>49</sup> "To create day nurseries costs a great deal, but these measures only re-establish an equality of opportunity which had been destroyed... for women by their functions as mother and housewife." Nicole Friderich. "Access to Education at all Levels". *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Vol. 375, Philadelphia, January 1968, pp. 133-144.



of work than in the nursery. We think that they should be able to do so without apology. We were also impressed by the number of working women who feel they are better mothers because the stimulus derived from their outside interests carries over into their relationship with their children. One brief<sup>50</sup> said: "We must realize that it is not necessarily true at all that all children are better off at home with their mothers; in fact, it has often seemed to me that many children would be happier and healthier (mentally) if they could be in the company of other children their own age for some part of the day. A mother who is unhappy because she would prefer to be out in the business world is probably not going to be the best mother."

#### *Public Responsibility*

149. There has been what we believe to be misguided opposition to the suggestion that the state play a part in the care of the child. We suggest that this position must be greatly modified. It seems clear, moreover, that it has never stood on very firm ground: that it lost validity with the establishment of the first public school. The need for wider community assistance in the care and education of even very young children emerges from our findings as an essential factor in improving the position of Canadian women.

150. We also point out that governments justify the spending of increasingly large sums at the levels of higher education as a means of developing human resources. In the light of what we know about the importance of the pre-school years, a well-planned child-care programme would seem to be just as important. Research conducted by Dr. Benjamin Bloom<sup>51</sup> led him to conclude that 50 per cent of the individual's intellectual development takes place between birth and the fourth year, or before the child has any contact with the school system. The 80 per cent mark is reached at the end of the second grade.

151. Our aim is neither to require women to enter the labour market, nor to compel them to stay home with their children. Many women want to undertake the full-time care of their children; others prefer outside activities or paid work. They should receive the help they need to make a choice possible. At present, women do not have the opportunity to choose

<sup>50</sup> Brief No. 279.

<sup>51</sup> Bloom, Benjamin S. *Stability and Change in Human Characteristics*. New York. John Wiley and Sons, 1964.





or the choice may carry unfair penalties. A woman who elects to stay with her children is sometimes forced to subsist on minimal welfare payments. The woman who goes out to work has to organize substitute care but may not be able to make adequate arrangements. One submission to us pointed out: "The lack of adequate day care services and foster home care for the children of working mothers, causes worry and frustration which impair efficiency."<sup>52</sup> Too often the intermediate choices—part-time work, extended leave-of-absence, suitable working hours—are not available. A sizeable minority of working mothers work part-time, and many work evening shifts and week-ends,<sup>53</sup> but there are many occupations which cannot be adapted to such schedules.

152. The time is past when society can refuse to provide community child services in the hope of dissuading mothers from leaving their children and going to work. We are faced with a situation that demands immediate action. Married women have been entering paid employment in steadily rising numbers. A child-care survey made by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics in April 1967 for the Women's Bureau, Department of Labour, showed that one in five mothers with children under 14, or 540,000 mothers, are working.<sup>54</sup> Twenty-four per cent of the Canadian female labour force are mothers. Among them, they have more than a million children of school age and pre-school age; about 18 per cent of all Canadian children. It was learned that 167,000 of these children of working mothers did not require arrangements for their care as their mothers either were able to work only while their children were in school, or were able to have their children with them by the nature of their employment as boarding or lodging housekeepers, babysitters or foster mothers, usually within their own homes. This left 908,000 children who required care arrangements. Median weekly earnings for working mothers are \$50 a week. The common assumption is that child care should be charged against the mother's earnings, rather than as an item in the family budget, and this may be related to the unsatisfactory provision she frequently is forced to make for her children. The present arrangements of working mothers for child care are shown in the following table:

<sup>52</sup> Brief No. 156.

<sup>53</sup> Thirty-six per cent of all working mothers work less than 35 hours a week. Thirty-four per cent of the total of working mothers work on weekends. Canada Department of Labour, The Women's Bureau. *Working Mothers and their Child Care Arrangements*. Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1970, p. 7.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* p. 5.





Table 1. Percentage Distribution of Children of Working Mothers by Detailed Care-arrangements, for Age Classes of the Children

Care arrangements	All ages	Under 3 years	3 to 5 years	6 to 13 years
	%	%	%	%
Total children: (Number in thousands).....	(908)	(147)	(210)	(551)
Per cent.....	100	100	100	100
Cared for in own home:				
Total.....	64	54	57	69
By father.....	22	13	19	25
By other relative under 16.....	3	1	2	5
By other relative 16 and over.....	17	15	14	19
By other household member.....	3	2	2	3
By other non-member of household.....	10	15	11	8
More than one arrangement.....	9	8	8	9
Cared for outside own home:				
Total.....	15	28	25	8
By relative.....	4	10	7	2
By non-relative.....	9	17	13	5
Day nursery or nursery school.....	1	1	3	—
Other arrangement.....	1	—	—	1
More than one arrangement.....	—	—	1	—
Cared for in and outside own home.....	6	7	11	4
Cared for by mother at work*.....	5	5	4	5
No regular arrangement.....	10	5	3	14

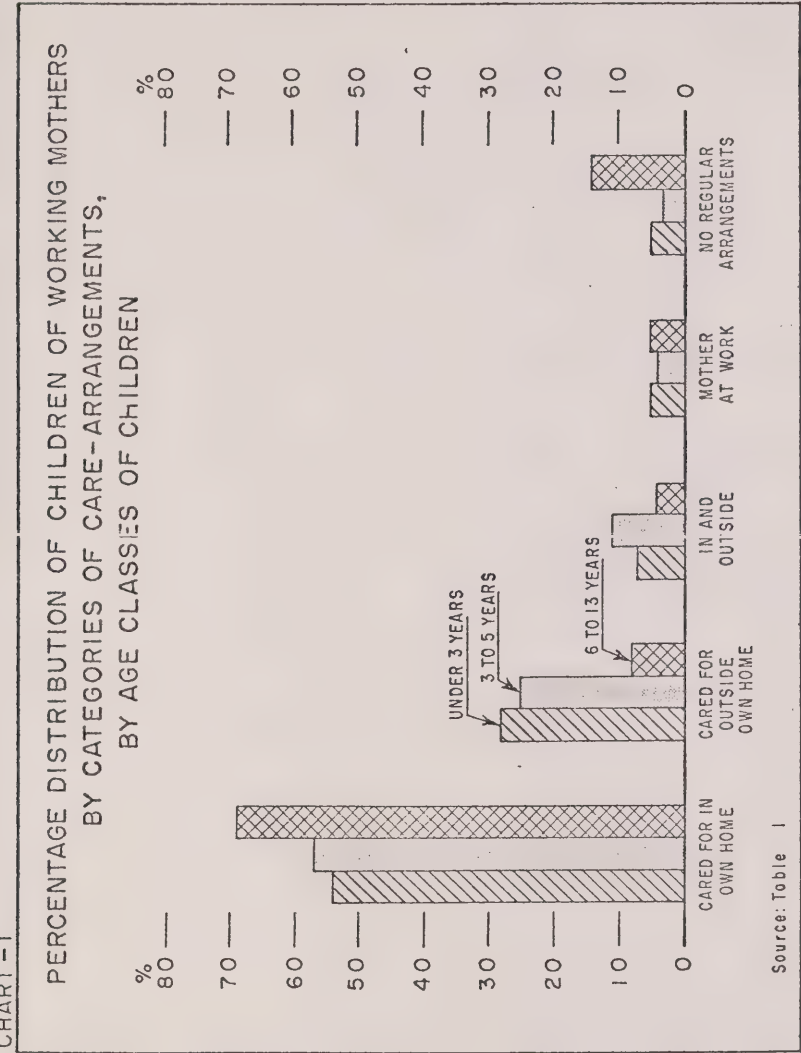
SOURCE: Canada Department of Labour, Women's Bureau. *Working mothers, and their Child Care Arrangements*. Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1970, Table 23, p. 41.

\*At occupations other than those of boarding or lodging housekeepers, baby-sitters or foster mothers.

### Day-Care Centres

153. Women who are not in paid employment may also urgently need day-care services. Mothers at home are not immune to illness or to becoming overwhelmed by a full-time job without holidays. The mother of a retarded or otherwise handicapped child, especially if she has other children, needs some relief if she is not to be worked beyond endurance. If the mother has suffered mental illness—and this is an increasing problem in our society—she will likely under new methods of treatment be returned home during recuperation, and supplementary help over such periods is desperately needed.









154. Existing day-care facilities can serve only a small fraction of these mothers. Many centres have long waiting lists. Other centres are of the wrong kind; they are located too far from residential neighbourhoods; they enforce a "needs test" which discourages mothers from applying; they cost too much; or they are not sufficiently advertised. For these reasons some day-care centres, according to the Canadian Welfare Council, are not being used to capacity.

155. If a mother has to work due to economic necessity, she has to have day-care for her children. If day-care centres are not available, these children are entrusted to relatives or strangers, and for some the arrangements are completely inadequate and even harmful. We are told: "...in communities from coast to coast an incalculable number of mothers are leaving infants and young children in casual and often hazardous day-care arrangements in order to go to work or to return to study."<sup>55</sup> The distress of the mother in having to resort to inadequate arrangements leads to her unhappiness as an individual and sometimes to loss of efficiency at work.

156. Repeated requests have been made in representations to this Commission for the establishment of day-care centres. Day-care centres are taken to mean all establishments where children under school age are cared for as a group for part of a day. Such establishments range from the nursery school to a private home where a housewife looks after her neighbours' children. There are widely varying conditions in regard to type and quality of care, age of children, the number of hours a day and of days a week, admission requirements or priorities, fees, and degree of government control.

157. Day-care in a private home has proved to be a practical supplement to the more formal centre. Such arrangements have been used successfully in several cities. The advantages are more individual care for very young children or for those needing special attention. They may be nearer to the child's home or to the route the parent takes in going to work. Costs are considerably less than those incurred at a day-care centre. It is important to stress that the homes should operate in conjunction with an established day-care service which supervises their operations, sets their fees and places the children with them.

158. It would be inadvisable, however, to rely too heavily on care in a private home. It is becoming more difficult to find suitable homes, as women turn in greater numbers to outside work, and there is a high rate of interruptions as families move away or for other reasons must discontinue giving care. The use of private homes in this way also points up the possible

<sup>55</sup> Brief No. 333.





danger of a common practice in most parts of Canada: permitting child-care arrangements in unlicensed and unsupervised households where parents make contact through classified advertisements in the daily newspaper. Where day-care homes are used, they should be part of an integrated child-care programme.

### *Other Countries*

159. There are many precedents for the establishment of a broad programme of day-care centres. For example, England now has a variety of programmes for pre-school care and a three-year training programme for pre-school teachers: the 1967 Plowden Report on education has emphasized the need for expansion. Sweden's pre-school centres are exceptionally well-equipped. They are under the control of the Ministry for Health and Social Affairs, while standards for the training of teachers are set by the Ministry of Education and Ecclesiastical Affairs. France has pre-school institutions directly under government control: *crèches*, boarding nurseries, day nurseries, baby-sitting centres and counselling centres are under the Ministry of Social Affairs; nursery schools and kindergartens are under the Ministry of Education. In Denmark, day-care facilities are available to children from birth, in Britain from the age of one month, in Sweden from six months, and in France from early infancy. It is quite evident that Canada is far behind in provision of services for pre-school children.

160. Various proposals have been put before the Commission for day-care centres under private auspices. In addition to commercial establishments, these might include provisions made by businesses, hospitals and universities for the children of their staff and students. There are few examples of this sort in Canada, although they can be found throughout European countries. While we are in favour of these arrangements, they are only a partial solution. It is also important to consider the advantages of a centre in the vicinity of the parents' home, obviating the need to take the child long distances.

161. Private initiative cannot cope with so large a problem. Governments must assume the major responsibility. They alone can plan and direct a well ordered network of services which will avoid duplication of facilities in some areas to the neglect of other communities.

162. Day-care services on the scale we envisage will involve the expenditure of a considerable sum of money. We would prefer an arrangement in which parents would pay directly for the service, with the help of an increased child-care allowance (See the Chapter on taxation) and on the basis



of a sliding scale of fees. Whatever part of the operating cost remains should, we believe, be borne by governments at various levels. We have attempted to arrive at a general estimate of the total operating costs.

163. In many modern countries, facilities are provided for children almost from birth. In Canada, also, we find a sizeable group of infants requiring supplementary care. Sixteen per cent of the children of working mothers are under three years.<sup>56</sup> There are almost no facilities now available for this age group. The day-care centre should make provision for infants and very young children, either in the form of nurseries with an adequate complement of qualified staff personnel, or in the form of well-supervised ancillary homes.

164. During the coming years, there will be in Canada approximately 1,300,000 children under three years of age. Taking into account the fact that only a small proportion of the very young children will likely be placed in day-care centres—roughly estimated perhaps one-tenth of all children under three—the requirement might be approximately 130,000<sup>57</sup> places in the appropriate services. There will also be around 1,300,000 children between three and six years of age. If one-quarter of them attend day-care centres, pre-school classes or nurseries on a full-time basis, some 325,000 places will be required for this age group. Again it must be recalled that the above figures are based on a rough estimate.

165. The annual cost of a day-care network covering these needs (hypothetically 450,000 places), could be estimated at about \$500,000,000. Daily operational costs for a good day-care centre amount to approximately \$4.60 per child.<sup>58</sup> If the attendance covers five days a week excluding holidays, (approximately 250 days a year), the annual cost per child would be slightly less than \$1,200. Parents' contributions would defray much of the cost.

166. In most instances, especially if a programme of increased child allowances is introduced, parents should pay for their use of the day-care centre programme. We believe this system is preferable because it would ensure that clients are drawn from all levels of society, and would lift day-care out of the context of poverty. To make sure that no low-income families are prevented from using the service, a sliding scale of fees should be introduced, related to family needs.

<sup>56</sup> *Op. cit.* Canada Department of Labour. p. 38.

<sup>57</sup> According to the child-care survey of the Women's Bureau, Department of Labour, there were, in 1967, about 140,000 working mothers who had a total of 172,000 children under three years of age. Since a proportion of these mothers used the services of domestic employees, an estimate of 130,000 places required in day-care centres appears realistic.

<sup>58</sup> Clifford, Howard. "Day-Care: an Investment in People." Background paper, Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada.





167. Therefore, we recommend that fees for the care of children in day-care centres be fixed on a sliding scale based on the means of the parents.

168. Government, however, should be charged with the responsibility of initiating the programmes, providing consultant and other services, and absorbing that part of the operating costs not met by fees. The three levels of government should continue to contribute on a cost-sharing basis.

169. The sharing of responsibilities by the three levels of government is a complex problem and presents many difficulties. While municipal, provincial and federal authorities are all concerned, the prime responsibility for initiating and supervising the programme lies at the provincial level. There is no doubt that such projects fall within provincial jurisdiction. Provincial governments have a direct line to the municipalities where public pressure for the opening of a centre is applied, but where financial resources are not sufficient. We believe that in addition to assuming the initiative in planning and administration, the provincial government should relieve municipalities of the larger part of the cost.

170. Therefore, we recommend that the provinces, where they do not already do so, pay not less than 80 per cent of the provincial-municipal contribution to day-care centres.

171. Because the provision of day-care centres is of major importance to the women of Canada, the Commission believes that the federal government should assume a continuing responsibility. There is considerable precedent for federal assistance in the fields of education and welfare, and grants have been extended for capital as well as operating costs, for example, in the building of vocational high schools<sup>59</sup> and hospitals.<sup>60</sup> At present, federal financial assistance to day-care centres through the Canada Assistance Plan has been ineffectual partly because it is limited to a share of operating costs only. Under the Canada Assistance Plan, the federal government shares with the provinces the cost of subsidies to operate nurseries for the children of needy families. As of January 31, 1969, only Ontario and Alberta had filed claims under the provision and they received \$103,766<sup>61</sup> and \$26,490 respectively in federal aid.

<sup>59</sup> The federal government pays up to 87½ per cent of the costs of building and equipping technical and vocational schools under the Adult Occupational Training Act (1967) Section 21. Provinces receive either the percentage of costs or grants of up to \$800 per person in that province between the ages of 15 and 19 or amounts calculated by combining the two methods according to a formula specified in the Act.

<sup>60</sup> Through the Health Resources Fund, federal money is given toward the construction of large teaching hospitals and medical schools; until March 1970 federal grants of up to \$2,000 a bed were made to the provinces to meet construction costs of urgently needed new general hospitals.

<sup>61</sup> The province of Ontario has proposed considerably higher expenditures in its current budget.





172. Undoubtedly a shortage of money to purchase or build premises is a factor in the failure to meet the need. We have therefore turned to the National Housing Act to make loans available for these purposes. It is hoped that action through the National Housing Act can proceed at once, in the light of immediate needs.

173. Therefore, we recommend that the National Housing Act be amended to (a) permit the making of loans for the construction, purchase and renovation of buildings for day-care centres, and (b) permit the inclusion of space for day-care centres in housing developments, including university buildings, for which loans are made under the Act.

174. The Commission has considered provisions under the National Housing Act and the Canada Assistance Plan, and has come to the conclusion that to incorporate the day-care centre programme in either of these would distort the explicit purpose of these acts.

175. Amendments to the National Housing Act can deal only with the construction of buildings and should be considered as supplementary.

176. We believe the Canada Assistance Plan is inappropriate because it is limited to welfare measures. We contend that a day-care centre programme must be conceived on much broader lines. It must be designed for all families who need it and wish to use it.<sup>62</sup> Nothing short of this kind of programme can give Canadian women the help they need in the vital task of caring for their children.

177. Canada's whole welfare system is now under general review, and it is essential that plans for day-care arrangements should be emphasized. Because day-care centres are an urgent need they should not be delayed while negotiations on a broader scale are completed with the provinces.

178. For the federal government to fail to proceed with a specific child-care programme, removed from welfare legislation of a more general nature, would be to deny the claim which Canadian women have made for concrete assistance in the burden of responsibility which they have been compelled to carry.

179. A national Day-Care Act would provide the framework and the incentive for such a programme. Initiative at the provincial government level could then proceed from clearly defined legislation. Within the community,

<sup>62</sup> A 1968 study by Dr. Florence A. Ruderman, showed that children placed in day-care included as many from middle and upper income levels as from lower income levels. When questioned about using such centres if available, 52 per cent of a sample of working mothers in the lower bracket said yes; so did 29 per cent in the highest income level. The positive features attributed to group care were dependability, mothers' convenience and children's enjoyment and benefit from the programme. Ruderman, Florence A. *Child Care and Working Mothers*. New York, Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 1968.



individuals and groups could more readily exercise their right to demand that provincial and municipal governments take advantage of the new Act. The provinces should also pass separate legislation as Ontario has now done.<sup>63</sup>

180. The Day-Care Act should, as an added incentive, offer substantial assistance with capital costs for an initial seven-year period.

181. Therefore, we recommend that the federal government immediately take steps to enter into agreement with the provinces leading to the adoption of a national Day-Care Act under which federal funds would be made available on a cost-sharing basis for the building and running of day-care centres meeting specified minimum standards, the federal government to (a) pay half the operating costs; (b) during an initial seven-year period, pay 70 per cent of capital costs; and (c) make similar arrangements for the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

182. Children of school age constitute the largest group of children with working mothers. (As shown in Table 1, there are 551,000 children from six to 13 years in a total of 908,000 requiring care arrangements). In many respects, their needs are as urgent as those of the pre-school child and, as the Table shows, a larger proportion of them are left with no regular arrangement for their care. A number of representations were made to us concerning the needs of "latch-key" children whose school hours fill only part of the working parents' day. Kindergarten may be only a half-day session. Later grades not only have a noon break (where in some instances children are not allowed to remain at the school), but begin later and end earlier than the standard working day. There are also school holidays to be considered, and occasional special days when teachers are at conventions and the school is closed.

183. The Commission believes that supplementary programmes should be provided for children of school age, and that such programmes should be included by the provincial governments in their over-all administration of child-care facilities.

184. The extent to which new premises are acquired, in lieu of extended use of school premises, may be a decision best left to local requirements. Undoubtedly, however, links with the educational system should be maintained. Such links should extend into the pre-school day-care centre programme. There has been a suggestion made for the incorporation of all child-care facilities into the educational system, and this may well be the trend of future arrangements.

<sup>63</sup> The Day Nurseries Act 1966, Province of Ontario.





*Standards*

185. Whether or not the educational function of the centre is stressed, certain standards of quality obviously must be maintained. All provinces,<sup>64</sup> with the exception of Quebec, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, have published regulations and standards governing the issuance of licences to run day nurseries. Only two provinces, however, Alberta and Ontario, employ inspectors to ensure that the standards are maintained. A few community colleges have started courses in pre-school education.

186. However, it is clear that a wide range of standards from good to very poor now prevails. In many areas there is no supervision of centres run in private homes. We have had our attention drawn to cases where such homes are dangerous to the physical and mental health of the children. A mother may be forced to enter into such arrangements without adequate investigation: she lacks the alternative of a supervised, well-run day-care centre. In the light of the importance of the pre-school years in the development of the child, it is imperative to establish and enforce high standards relating to physical facilities, daily programmes, and staff.

187. Therefore, we recommend that each province and territory establish a Child-Care Board to be responsible for the establishment and supervision of day-care centres and other child-care programmes, which will (a) plan a network of centres (as to location, type, etc.), (b) set and enforce standards and regulations, (c) provide information and consultants, (d) promote the establishment of new day-care services, and (e) approve plans for future day-care services.

188. Further, we recommend that the Department of National Health and Welfare offer an extension of advisory services to the provinces and territories through the establishment of a unit for consultation on child-care services.

189. If children are to be cared for inside the home, supplementary help of various kinds is possible. The most common arrangement now is for another member of the family, the father or an older child, to take over when the mother is ill or absent, or busy with other duties. The difficulty is that school and jobs take these members of the family out of the home at the hours when they are most needed. Frequently when both husband and wife hold jobs they choose shift work so that one remains at home with the children. The disadvantage of this arrangement, of course, is a disrupted household where meals and recreation are seldom enjoyed together.

<sup>64</sup> Only five provinces—British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Nova Scotia—have special laws covering day nurseries. Two others—Manitoba and Newfoundland—apply legislation originally meant for other establishments.



190. There is also some prejudice against the sharing by fathers in child care and household tasks. Some men still take the position that they will not do domestic work or look after children, and some women perpetuate this prejudice by keeping household arrangements and care of the children as their special domain.

191. Sweden in its report to the United Nations<sup>65</sup> on the status of women makes sweeping suggestions to change these customs, under the term "male emancipation". The premise is that men also should be free to choose. The Swedish statement advocated: "the right of a husband to remain at home while the children are small where it is found more appropriate for the mother to devote herself to gainful employment."

192. Baby-sitting services are available in many communities through established agencies, and private arrangements are commonly made with teenagers or elderly people, at an hourly rate. In one city, for example, the agency rates are about \$1.10 an hour,<sup>66</sup> with a daily rate of \$11.00 or \$12.00 varying with the number of children to be cared for. The baby-sitter usually limits her duties to supervision of the child which may involve providing meals for him, but she does no other household work. Some parents employ sitters on this basis for evenings of recreation or for longer holiday periods. The cost, however, is prohibitive for families in the lower-income brackets.

193. Full-time housekeepers or household workers are increasingly rare in Canadian homes. In the Chapter on the economy we have urged an improvement in working conditions and salaries for such workers. We are aware that some families may then find it even more costly than at present to employ domestic helpers. However, it may still be possible to hire a housekeeper in a home with several children at less cost than maintaining the children in a day-care centre. Many families believe this is a preferable arrangement, and our concern is that salaries and working conditions should be such that competent women will be attracted to this kind of work.

194. Associated with the scarcity of housekeepers are numerous complaints about inadequate service. An example from one submission is as follows: "Very often, many of us have had to settle for housekeepers who were not adequate mother substitutes: young girls who spent the afternoon watching TV, reading, or who were not attentive to the children in general; or women who had no idea of how to care for small children, of how to give first aid care in case of accidents, etc. . . ."<sup>67</sup> Recommendations for the

<sup>65</sup> The Swedish Institute. *Sweden Today. The Status of Women in Sweden, Report to the United Nations*. Stockholm, 1968.

<sup>66</sup> Sitters Unlimited, Ottawa.

<sup>67</sup> Brief No. 349.





training of household workers are made in the Chapter on education. These measures were strongly advocated by many of the women appearing before the Commission.

195. Present programmes to provide visiting homemakers on an emergency or short-term basis should be greatly expanded. Canada in January 1969 had only 121 homemaker service agencies with a total of 1,915 women employed as homemakers.<sup>68</sup> This is a ratio of nine per 100,000 of the population.<sup>69</sup> Most of these services are in cities of over 100,000; communities under 30,000 are very badly served. British Columbia has a wider number of homemaker agencies in her smaller communities than are found in other provinces, but nowhere in Canada does the supply meet the need and in the Atlantic Provinces the programme has barely begun.<sup>70</sup>

196. Homemaker services frequently operate in conjunction with the Red Cross, the Victorian Order of Nurses, Home Care health schemes, and Family Service agencies. Their costs are borne about 48 per cent by government,<sup>71</sup> about 27 per cent by clients, about 17 per cent through United Appeals and Community Chests, and about eight per cent through other welfare sources. The top fees charged (fees are on a sliding scale in most cases, according to ability to pay) range from \$1.56 an hour in some localities to \$2.30 an hour in others. A daily charge may range from \$6.00 to \$18.00. In most places, a homemaker's pay is close to the minimum wage while in others it is considerably higher. For example, the top wage received by homemakers in Ottawa (May 1970) was \$1.95 an hour, and the agency also provides uniforms, holidays with pay, workmen's compensation, and long-term disability insurance.

197. Homemaker services are extended strictly on the basis of need, regardless of income. Priority is given to households with children where the mother is ill or has died, or in other emergencies. Care is also given under this scheme to aged people living alone, and in these cases the length of service may be extended indefinitely, on a basis of several hours a day or week. In most cases, however, the homemaker stays with a household over a period of from two days to three weeks. The average time per case<sup>72</sup> is 13.6 days.

<sup>68</sup> Canadian Welfare Council, provisional figures prepared for a report (to be published) on the homemaker services in Canada in 1969.

<sup>69</sup> Sweden has approximately 200 homemakers per 100,000 of her population.

<sup>70</sup> Nova Scotia has four recently established agencies; New Brunswick one; Prince Edward Island one; Newfoundland none.

<sup>71</sup> *Loc. cit.* Canadian Welfare Council.

<sup>72</sup> *Loc. cit.*



198. Homemakers in most areas are recruited largely from among middle-aged women who have not previously worked outside their own households. Some agencies, as they begin to offer higher rates of pay and special training and certification, are experiencing a larger influx of younger women. Recruiting of men has also been considered. Usually educational requirements are waived although increasingly homemakers are being offered the advantage of training courses. Efforts are still needed to increase the prestige of the homemaker's role in line with her duties as household manager and mother substitute.

199. The need for more visiting homemakers in Canada has been clearly shown. They solve a family's most urgent problems in times of crisis. Their value in keeping a home intact through such emergencies is a tremendous asset to the community and should be recognized as such. Such a supplementary resource in case of illness or accident makes more practicable the use of day-care centres as a regular service to families. A greater supply of homemakers and trained household workers, and extended day-care services, can do much to meet the general requirements of child care by offering strong support to the basic responsibility of the parents.

#### (ii) Responsible Parenthood

200. The scientific control of the human reproductive function is one of the most important developments of this century. Conception can be prevented temporarily by a variety of birth control methods or permanently by sterilization; it can be induced by artificial insemination or in ovulation; a precarious pregnancy can be maintained by drugs or techniques preventing spontaneous miscarriage; pregnancy can be safely terminated; a precise date for delivery can be planned. Further research is opening prospects of even more exact control.

201. Control of human reproduction has far-reaching consequences. It enables parents to plan the size of their families and the spacing of their children. It helps individuals and couples to reach a better sexual adjustment. Like many forms of scientific progress, it reduces the tyranny of natural forces over human beings; it makes possible more intelligent control of events; it increases personal freedom. All this requires readjustments in the law, and reshaping of social customs and attitudes. Women, as the child-bearers, will be most affected by this new freedom and responsibility.

202. In one sense, birth control is a social problem in Canada. Families with higher education and in higher income brackets have had easy access to birth control methods; the poor and less well-educated have not. The



